KATHERINE TINGLEY
and her
RÂJA-YOGA SYSTEM
of
EDUCATION

By

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By Katherine Tingley

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KATHERINE TINGLEY IN HER OFFICE

KATHERINE TINGLEY AND HER RÂJA-YOGA SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

MUCH inquiry on the part of the general public has been aroused as to the nature, the scope and the results of Katherine Tingley's new ideals of education for boys and girls. What is their bearing on practical life? Curiosity has been further stimulated by reports from various parts of the United States, from Cuba, and from several European countries, of the very unusual success of Râja-Yoga students in filling positions of trust in banks, in commercial life, as writers and public speakers, as instructors, as teachers of music and painting and literature, and in the mechanical arts and in invention, on all of which there seemed brought to bear, not only the technical equipment but also a power of personality that is the one determining factor in success. So widespread has been this inquiry that a journey across the continent from Boston to Lomaland, on the sunset shores of the Pacific, seemed quite in order in an endeavor to pluck out the heart of the mystery.

What does one find? A school and college where children, youths and maidens pursue all the usual branches of the graded school and college curriculum; but where in addition is the new type of instruction made essential by progressive demands in the fitting of young men and women for their

part in the new order of life that the reconstruction of the world is forcing upon us.

The Râja-Yoga System of Education was founded in 1900 by Katherine Tingley. Could time, place, and circumstance more marvelously agree than that this regeneration and re-creation of educational ideals should have been evolved in the dawn of the Twentieth Century? All unknowing, Humanity stood then upon the threshold of a new world, so near yet so undiscerned in the future lay the dark shadow of that tragedy and suffering dating from August First, 1914, to the memorable November Eleventh, 1918.

We are now by virtue of that tragic war that has swept over the nations, not only confronting new conditions, we are actually *in* them. The ideals of the Middle Ages are not less applicable to the conditions of life today than are many of the Mid-Nineteenth Century ideals. We are in a rapidly changing environment. It is the part of wisdom to adapt oneself to his environment. Whether one approves of the law of gravitation or not, he cannot safely defy it. Evolutionary advance is a fact with which we must reckon. Success depends on the intelligent comprehension of, and the power to co-operate with, new conditions. It is not necessary to emphasize so axiomatic a truth.

The student of history cannot but be struck by the truth revealed in any prolonged and genuine study of the vast drama of human life, by the truth that great leaders are provided for before the time that calls them into action, and are, unconsciously to themselves, being prepared for the important and determining part they are to play in this moving drama of human progress.

Dr. Andrew D. White, the founder and first president of Cornell University, has related how, in his early youth, sitting on the shore of the blue inland lake, a vision came before him

of a great and beautiful institution of learning to be established there. The dream came true — realized in the University of Cornell. In the quiet old town of Newburyport, Massachusetts, a young girl had her dreams of a new order of education that prefigured itself before her. Like Mary Lyon, Katherine Tingley in her childhood was haunted and companioned by these dreams that began as a little girl. "People do not live right," the child would say. In some vague and shining way those ideals which we now designate and define by 'The Brotherhood of Humanity' hovered about her. She found herself in the environment of the typical New England town with its theological atmosphere that is so pre-eminently the inheritance of the Puritan. Vague and yet insurmountable desires, aspirations, haunted her imagination, until she might have exclaimed, with the poet:

> "*And others came; Desires and Aspirations;*
> *Winged Persuasions, and Veiled Destinies.*"

And who could understand these inarticulate fancies and intuitive gropings of the child, the young girl, for "something better than she had known"? Yet in these lay the germ of that wonderful work for which she was innately fitted. As George Eliot makes one of her characters say in *Daniel Deronda:* "Visions are the creators and feeders of mankind." To Columbus, to Newton, to Marconi, came the vision. After that — its realization.

So to Katherine Tingley came the vision of a new educative process that would develop a higher order of men and women. But its way to realization was the way of mingled pain, disaster, sometimes defeat, however temporary, that is so inevitably the appointed path of all the benefactors of mankind. For those who would leave the world better than

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RÂJA-YOGA ACADEMY (RIGHT) AND TEMPLE OF PEACE (LEFT)

they find it, the way to the Mount of Vision ever leads through Gethsemane.

The Râja-Yoga System of Education was originated by its Foundress as the result of her own experience and knowledge. In her own words: "I found that the conditions of suffering in the world were due to lack of knowledge of the laws governing human life. I realized that all our systems of helpfulness were totally backhanded, so to speak. We dealt then, and most people deal now, with effects rather than causes. After the damage is done we attempt to repair. I saw a picture of reaching down to fundamental causes, starting the child right and fitting him to meet the exigencies of life with some possibility of confidence and keeping the upper hand, retaining originality, purity and ideals, and following a clean life. What I planned to do was to prevent the damage being done. The world was well equipped with havens for the beaten and the fallen. I wanted to evolve an institution to take humanity in hand before it was worsted in the struggle of life. The Râja-Yoga College is such a School of Prevention."

"Just what does this 'Râja-Yoga' mean, Madame Tingley?" I asked. "Royal Union," she smilingly replied; "it stands for the perfect balance of all the faculties — physical, mental, and spiritual. It is the only true training," she continued; "it is simple, sincere,— the basis of real character-building. It means an adequate equipment for the great art of human life."

Many thoughts were drifting through my mind as I sat with the Theosophical Leader in her study. Secretaries and other workers were coming and going; the telephone on her desk made its customary demands, usually in the middle of a sentence, as it has the habit of doing; two or three days ahead was the date set for starting on a lecture-tour over the

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THE RÂJA-YOGA INTERNATIONAL CHORUS

continent, the journey complicated by taking with her twelve of the students of the Râja-Yoga Academy and College; a thousand details claimed the Leader's attention at one and the same time.

"What is the real object of this great lecture-tour, Madame Tingley," I asked, "and just what do you anticipate accomplishing by it?"

"Naturally one does not fare forth over the continent without some definite purpose in view," she responded. "To some extent the title of my first lecture, 'Education, a Vital Factor in World Reconstruction,' may suggest an answer to your question."

"Surely," I replied; "but that higher education is a vital factor in this world reconstruction everyone will agree, for it is rather a self-evident proposition, if you will pardon me for putting it in just that way. All our university professors affirm this more or less; since I can remember, I have heard little else than of the crying need of higher education. Now how do you transform this by the ideals of Theosophy?"

"The welfare of future generations actually depends, does it not," she said, "upon the welfare and training of the children of today. Let me have a child from infancy until it is seven years old and, under the Râja-Yoga System, perfectly carried out and adequately applied, I can accomplish more towards its moral and intellectual training than in twice the time after that age."

"That is saying a great deal," I ventured.

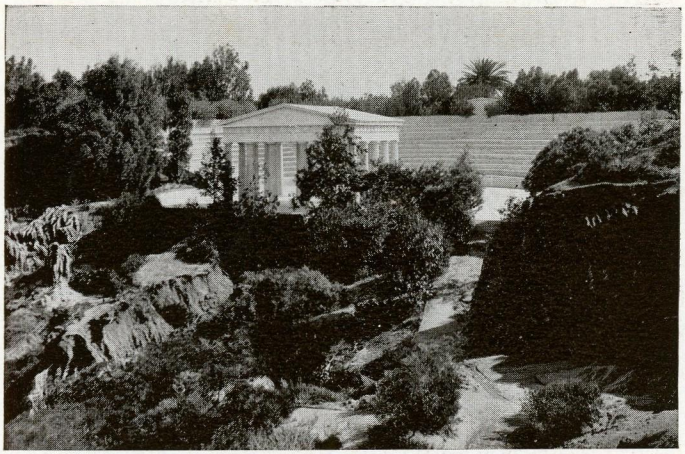
"No more than the actual truth. I have seen it, I have demonstrated it, I know it," responded Madame Tingley. "Because that child would have been taught its own innate divinity. This is a simple fact. A child's mind is singularly open to the purest impressions. My one unalterable purpose is so to mold the child's entire nature that he will be a better

citizen than you or I; for this citizenship presupposes not only a lofty spirit of patriotism, a more perfect and exalted spirituality, but also a great spirit of brotherly love. My ideal is to nurture the child in love; but by love I do not mean an enervating self-indulgence, nor physical emotionalism; I mean the training of the child to be such as is expressed in the phrase, 'to be able to live well with our kind,' and to be able to live well in all family and social and national relations embodies an ideal that is as true as it is practical, as far as it goes; but even this would not be enough for me; I would ask for more."

"Now the Râja-Yoga System does prepare its students to enter intelligently into the active duties of life; to encounter its problems with the recognition of understanding, and thus to meet them with courage and with optimism; and above all, it lays a firm foundation for the life of the home, for spiritual advancement, character-building, for happiness as well as usefulness.

"As to the special aid of Theosophy as in any way greater than or differing from the general moral ideals supposed to be usually inculcated in our schools and colleges, Theosophy especially emphasizes the truth of the divine nature in man; it conveys, even to the most youthful pupil, a realization of the duality of his nature; and it shows the child, in the most simple way at first, the beauty of loving service. And regarding service, can we say too much? Does not this one simple word comprehend what the old catechisms used to designate as the whole duty of man? Indeed, we can but recall that vital expression, 'He that is greatest among you, let him be the servant of all.'

"How many people are there in the world who are really satisfied with their lives? Are they satisfied with existing conditions — individual, civic, and national? It is not enough



THE GREEK THEATER AS SEEN FROM THE CANYON

to hold ideals, however noble. In order that these ideals may be of any use, may be related to the practical business of living, we must know how to apply them. It is this that I mean by Râja-Yoga education."

Later I realized more fully what Katherine Tingley meant, when I was privileged to see the actual and technical working processes of class teaching. The one signal hindrance to describing the results of these methods is that the results seem half incredible; that little children in the Râja-Yoga Preparatory School from four to six years of age have been enabled to develop such beauty of poise and presence, such a grasp of the elementary education in reading, spelling, geography, arithmetic; such an unusual understanding of what they are reading; such a breadth of geographical knowledge, such swift facility in our first four mathematical excursions of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; that they should have acquired so much general knowledge in so many directions of the earth on which they live, and that their faculties should be so keen and so cultivated and

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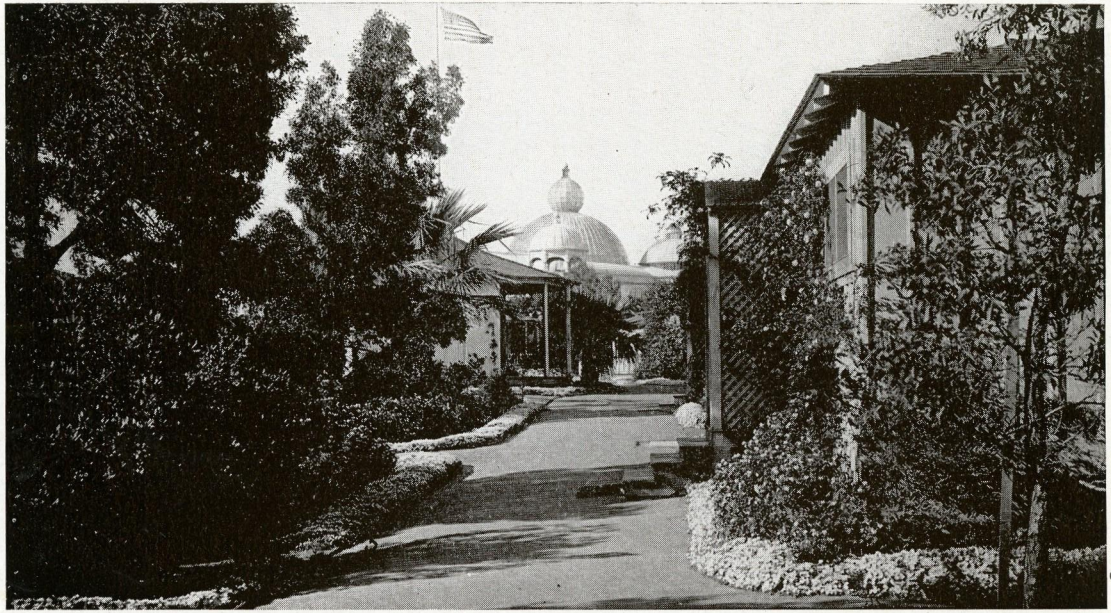
DANCE OF GREEK MAIDENS IN 'A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM' IN THE GREEK THEATER

stimulated by beautiful work in the arts and crafts. More even than all this is the radiant health and happiness and keen interest of these children.

It was really an unusual experience to see class after class, from the child of four to the lad and the girl of sixteen, as they demonstrated their familiarity with different branches of education — algebra, geometry, French, Spanish, construction of English; relating in their own words the meaning of scientific facts or literary research on some matters they had been reading. It was a wonder to see these children and young people equipped with these and other phases of technical education at an age at least four to six years earlier than we find a similar degree of achievement in our usual public schools or preparatory academies. And let me emphasize that in all this there is no cramming, no overtaxing of the child's mind, no mere precociousness in the phenomenal sense. It is simply the normal result of a better system of educational training. The children spend but three hours a day in the class-room. The rest of the time is taken up largely out of doors with their games, their gardens, and their calisthenics.

One aspect, by the way, of the power of concentration was strikingly revealed to me in the music-room, where at eight or ten pianos, eight or ten girls were all practising at once on as many different themes, and yet no one in the least disturbing the others, because each was entirely absorbed in her own work, oblivious to that of her neighbor. For the more advanced pupils there are private pianos at their disposal for the finishing work on concert solos.

Music is considered as a factor of practical education as much as mathematics; not to turn out professional musicians, but as a potent factor in development. Every child is instructed in music as every child is taught the multiplication tables. Rhythm, poise, power result from this training. The



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A GLIMPSE AT SOME OF THE BOYS' BUNGALOW HOMES

same may be predicated of the wonderful and beautiful training in the drama, in the acquired control of all the faculties thus developed, evolving the ability to deal with situations in life with promptness, and decision, and judgment. Indeed, the whole effort is to build character, to evoke faculties too often lying latent.

The musical and dramatic training, as given at Point Loma, are far more intimately related to the development of poise and self-control and the power of swift decision so often demanded in later life, than has usually been associated with these arts. To consider them indeed as factors of actual living rather than mere decorative attachments is to enter into the deep inner significance of dramatic and musical culture.

The Arts and Crafts Department is another feature of incalculable value in stimulating originality and the creative faculties, and in its initiation of the young students into the capacity to conserve the resources of life, to cultivate the sense of beauty and order, to enable the students to utilize innumerable provisions of Nature in adaptation to the needs of living. This is a merely suggestive and elementary indication of results to which much space might not unprofitably be devoted. In the range of studies in the Râja-Yoga College, special emphasis is thus laid on both the fine and the industrial arts; on a wide and splendidly assimilated grasp of literature; on mathematics as indispensable to all work in life; on philosophy practically taught and applied to the great law of co-operation for furthering the real brotherhood of humanity; together with law, with practical forestry and horticulture, and domestic economy. This is but a bare outline of the work of the School. The staff of teachers is large. It is composed of graduates from American and European universities and of some distinguished specialists in certain lines, all of whom, in addition to their university training, have

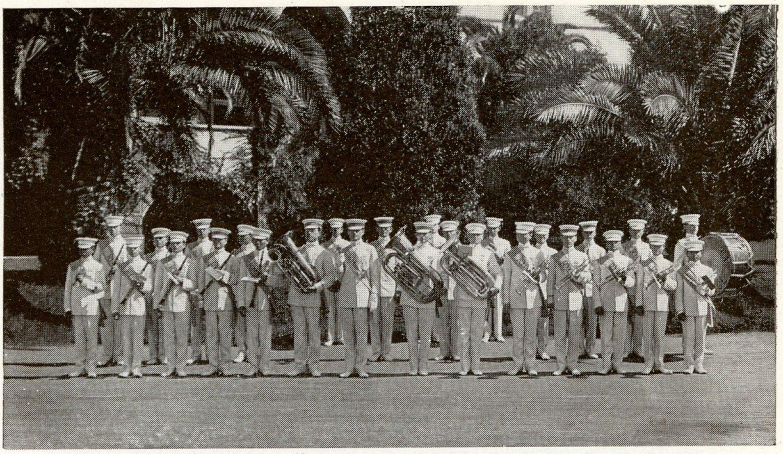
AT A PICNIC

received special training in the Râja-Yoga system from Madame Tingley herself.

Aside from the more usual features of education, Point Loma has a meteorological station, splendidly equipped with instruments, among which is a delicate seismograph recording the faintest tremor, all of which instruments the pupils are taught to use. The weather reports are sent from here to the Bureau at Washington. Again, the Aryan Theosophical Press, publishing three periodicals which have a large circulation in many countries; publishing in addition books and pamphlets, in several languages, that go all over the world — this Press, all of whose departments are carried on by the students, offers a work as interesting as it is important. There is a bookbinding department turning out work whose perfection of technical beauty excites the enthusiasm of Eastern and European publishers. The Photo-Engraving Department has also won high praise for its excellent work, including its beautiful color prints —all done by students and graduates of the Râja-Yoga College.

RECREATION HOUR

The beautiful International Theosophical Headquarters estate, known as 'Lomaland,' impresses all visitors with new possibilities of Nature in its wonderful outlook on the Pacific, the changing lights and colors of mountains, hillsides and canyons, the infinite spaces of sea and sky. The famous Point Loma Boulevard running past the estate continues to the extreme end of the Government Reservation beyond

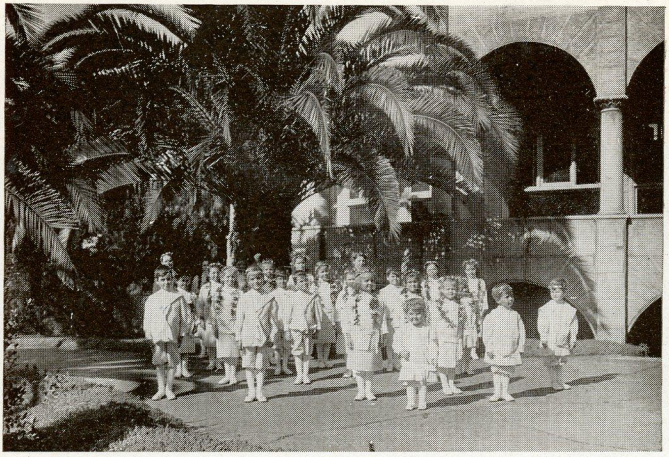


THE RÂJA-YOGA COLLEGE BAND

the United States Wireless Station. The view includes Coronado, the City and Bay of San Diego, the Cuyamaca Mountains, Table Mountain in Lower California, the great Pacific, and the Coronado, San Clemente, and Catalina Islands. At the entrance to the harbor a new lighthouse and Fort Rosecrans add interest to the scene.

The 'Lomaland' estate comprises approximately five hundred acres, with nearly two miles of shore on the Pacific. Two main gateways — Roman and Egyptian — give access to the grounds, the former to an avenue of stately palms, rising to the hilltop. Crowning the crest of the hill are the Temple of Peace and the Râja-Yoga Academy, each with its beautiful glass dome visible for many miles around.

The first Greek theater in the United States is that which Madame Tingley constructed here in 1901. Placed at the head of a canyon, through its perfect Doric stoa one looks out on the shining Pacific. Here are presented Greek and Shakespearean plays. One could fancy himself looking

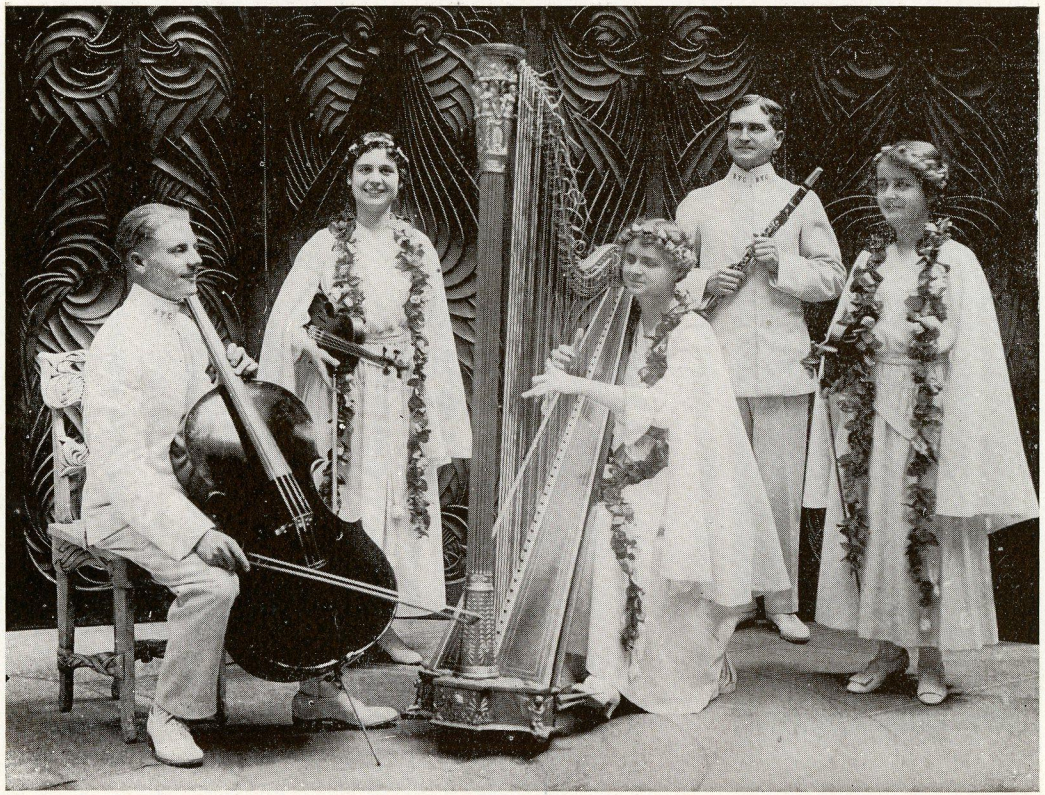


GROUP OF THE YOUNGEST PUPILS — 'THE TOTS'

out on the blue Aegean. The beautiful walks, flower-bordered, tree-shaded, that abound on the estate might not inappropriately be more fully pictured. Indeed the allurement to description is almost irresistible; for the wonderful sunsets flaming and melting away over the blue waters, stars that seem to move in space with a splendor unrivaled, the changeable hues of mountains in the distance — every vista thus offers its own peculiar beauty.

A reference to spiritual knowledge made by Madame Tingley in some previous conversation lingered in my mind and incited me to wonder just how the founder of the Râja-Yoga System of Education would define it. I ventured to ask the question.

"Spiritual Knowledge," she repeated, as I formulated my question, "ah! it cannot come until mankind live as brothers, conscious of their own essential divinity, conscious of their higher nature; not till they so live, can they feel that inspiration that should move every human heart. Simply because



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STUDENTS WHO ACCOMPANIED MADAME TINGLEY ON ONE OF HER LECTURE-TOURS, 1919

of this lack of insight, I even presume to say that the human mind has not been able to fully interpret the real truths of Christianity. In order to know himself, man must become a forcible expression of the divine life in both inner thought and outer action. Have I made it clear?"

"You give me a new perception of its more essential meaning," I replied. "That is to say, you indicate the real significance of spiritual knowledge divested of merely sentimental cant."

No thoughtful observer or student of this Râja-Yoga System can fail to recognise the determining way in which it incites the lives of the youth to evolve in accord with the higher principles of Christianity (which Madame Tingley declares to be in essence identical with Theosophy), in the gaining of a wonderful power of self-control through the knowledge of one's own divinity.

The Râja-Yoga System is no longer in the nature of an experiment. For many years it has abundantly proved and demonstrated its success. Râja-Yoga students are taught to do their duty; they learn self-control, order, respect for law, and are well prepared for the battles of practical life.

It is not indeed too much to say that, could such a system of education be universally applied throughout the world, within two or three generations we should have practically a new race of men and women. Many of our leading writers are discussing the problem of the New Humanity. There are few of these exponents of an ideal prefiguring itself before us all, who have not their individual theories regarding the methods to bring about so desirable a result. Rather it is striking to see how, in their varied presentations, the general consensus of opinion is beginning to echo many of the more prominent features of the Râja-Yoga training. It has its

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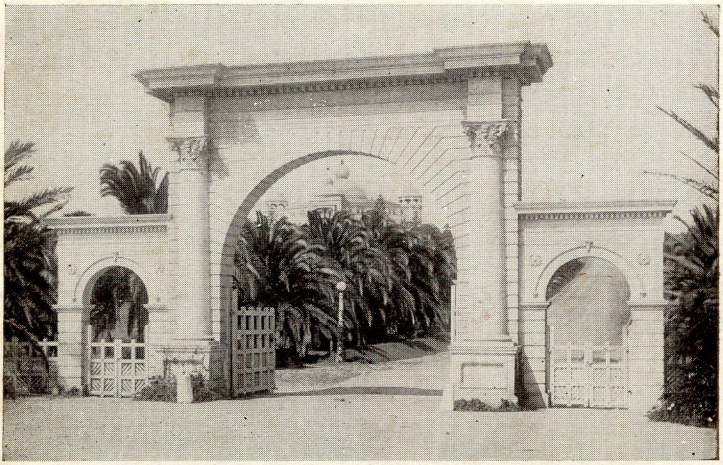
ON THE WAY TO THE RECREATION GROUNDS

exponents even among writers who would not recognise it by this name, because its principles have a universality that appeals to thoughtful people.

One beautiful feature of Madame Tingley's educational work is a Department for Free Education. Since she founded the School in 1900, many children have been gratuitously educated in this Department. She established the practice that for every five paying pupils, one would be given free education. The development of character, the upbuilding of all those qualities that make for sensible and useful manhood and womanhood, are singularly manifested in the results of this new system of education.

No more refined, cultured, and thoughtful people can be found than the co-workers at the International Headquarters of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society. They comprise some eminent scholars and specialists of other nationalities as well as our own; and the social atmosphere thus created is one of distinctive charm. Pupils are thus in an ideal environment. Even the youngest reflect that charm of polish and manner on which Emerson justly lays such stress. "Give a youth manners and accomplishments," said Emerson, "and he need not be at the trouble of earning palaces and fortunes."

In Madame Tingley's own words, it may be affirmed that this system "prepares its students to perform the active duties of life and meet its problems understandingly, courageously, and optimistically; and above all, it lays a firm foundation for the home-life and for future happiness and usefulness, particularly on lines of self-mastery and self-directed evolution."



ENTRANCE TO GROUNDS OF INTERNATIONAL THEOSOPHICAL HEADQUARTERS, POINT LOMA, CALIFORNIA